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Applicant:

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on:

<u>AMENDMENT</u>

Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on December 24, 2003, in the above-identified application. Reconsideration and further examination are requested.

An extension of time to respond to the Office Action is respectfully requested. A Petition for Extension of Time and the appropriate fee are being filed concurrently with this Amendment.